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the progress of the operation. This method has been tried thus far on Richmond earth, in which the diatoms are heavier than the adherent matter, but it is believed to be generally applicable.

CUPRO SCHEELITE. — This new mineral which occurs in different parts of California, and which resembles scheelite in which a part of the lime is replaced by oxide of copper, was first described and named by Professor Whitney. Mr. Hawks, in describing it to the San Francisco Microscopical Society, stated that when first discovered it was thought to be a mechanical mixture of scheelite with some copper mineral, but that a careful examination under the microscope showed it to be perfectly homogeneous. The decision of the microscope was subsequently confirmed by the discovery of crystals of the mineral, which proved it to be a distinct and new species.

SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— On the 28th of December, 1876, died at the Smithsonian Institution, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, F. B. Meek, long connected with the Institution as a volunteer assistant in the department of palæontology.

Mr. Meek was of Irish extraction, his parents having settled in Indiana some sixty years ago, and shortly after his birth removed to Kentucky, where young Meek received a common school education, and was known when quite young for his ability as a writer, his retiring disposition, and for exhibiting a marked interest in geology and kindred branches of science. On arriving at his majority he entered into commercial pursuits in which he was not successful, and afterward for a time earned his daily bread as a painter of portraits and such other subjects as the necessities of his surroundings offered to him. He was also connected for a time with some local museum of curiosities of the old-fashioned kind. At a later date his geological predilections were favored by a connection with some of the earlier geological surveys in the West, while his scientific career may be said to have fairly been opened by his employment as a draughtsman and assistant on the survey of the State of New York. The discovery which first brought him into prominence was his identification, independently, of Peruvian rocks in America, a fact which was discovered nearly simultaneously by several better-known geologists. His undivided attention to palæontology and his almost unrivaled abilities in delineating the fossils which he studied, joined to great caution and what appeared to be an intuitive capacity for recognizing the relations of the remains he described, soon placed him in the front rank of American palæontologists. The progress of geological discovery in the West, which has culminated at the present day in the great surveys of Hayden, Powell, and Wheeler, under government auspices, is in large part due to the abilities of Mr. Meek, for without such able coöperation the fossils of the different strata, of which by far the greater proportion were determined by him, would have failed to yield a moiety of the material for generalization upon which American geology has been built up. Among numerous publications on American palæontology by the deceased may be mentioned the Invertebrate Palæontology of Illinois, Ohio, part of California, in the Geological Survey Reports of these States; an Early Report on the Palæontology of the Upper Missouri, published by the Smithsonian Institution; on the Palæontology of the Explorations under Simpson, Macomb, King, and other Government Surveys and lastly the great work of his life, the Palæontology of the Upper Missouri, just issued by Dr. Hayden in the quarto series of the publications of the Geological Survey of the Territories. In all these volumes the palæontological work was strictly his own, though his name was for sufficient reasons associated with that of the geologist to whom the collections were due or under whose direction the publications were issued.

Mr. Meek left no kindred so far as is known. His habits were most simple and regular, abstinent to a remarkable degree, and he shrank from society, except that of a scientific character or of a few old and valued friends. This retiring disposition was encouraged by the infirmity of total deafness by which he was afflicted during later years and which he bore with the utmost patience. Only a few intimates could know of his cheerful, helpful spirit, his love of children and animals, his transparent honesty and probity, and the generosity which led him to render assistance to the beginner or the practiced geologist whenever his help was requested. His death resulted from the weakness consequent on pulmonary hæmorrhage from which he had suffered for some years. His illness was painless and of short duration, and his remains were carried from the geological hall of the Institution he had served so long to the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, by a small but appreciative assemblage of his associates and friends. — W. H. Dall.

— The Summer School of Biology at the Peabody Academy of Science, Salem, Mass., met with such a good measure of success last year that it will be a permanent feature of the work done at the Academy. Though the school was limited to fifteen, more than this number were present. Over forty lectures were delivered. The laboratory work done was in some cases excellent. The school is designed to give laboratory facilities to naturalists and teachers residing in inland towns who may like to spend their summer vacations in collecting and studying marine life at the seaside.

— Professor Valerien de Moeller, of the Imperial School of Mines, St. Petersburg, Russia, is preparing a monograph of the *Fusulerias*, and desires any information on the subject that he can obtain from American palæontologists.

— Prof. L. de Koninck, the veteran palæontologist, of Liége, Belgium, has commenced his great work on the Carboniferous fossils of Belgium, to contain 150 plates, 4to. After forty-five years of service the Belgian government has conferred upon him a pension, which will enable him to spend the remainder of his life in comparative independence.

— The Congrès International des Américanistes will hold its second session at Luxembourg, September 10–13, 1877. The secretary, Mr. J. Schoetter, is very anxious that communications be sent at as early a date as practicable from Americans. He hopes that American savants will be induced to take as large a part as possible in this meeting, and that they will furnish matter enough for one volume of the *Comptes rendus.*

— Karl Ernst von Baer, the eminent zoölogist and embryologist, died at St. Petersburg, November 29, 1876, aged eighty-five years. He will always be remembered for his classic work, Ueber Entwickelungsgeschichte der Thiere, 1828–37. In 1834 he resigned his chair of zoölogy at Königsberg and removed to St. Petersburg, becoming librarian of the Academy of Sciences. — Theodor von Heuglin, the traveler and zoölogist, died at Stuttgart, November 5th, aged fifty-two years. — A well-known Scotch zoölogist, Dr. T. Strethill Wright, died October last, aged fifty-eight.

— In order to furnish an opportunity for teachers in natural science and special students in geology to become acquainted with the methods of practical work in that science, a Summer School of Geology will be conducted by Prof. N. S. Shaler and Mr. Wm. M. Davis, Jr., assistant in geology, during six weeks in July and August, under the form of instruction at Cambridge and an excursion through Massachusetts and into New York. The school will open early in July at the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, in Cambridge. A fortnight will be spent in introductory work, and in short, daily excursions. The rest of the time will be divided between the Connecticut Valley, the Berkshire Hills (Western Massachusetts), and either the Helderberg or the Catskill Mountains of New York. In each locality some central point, characteristic of the district and easily accessible by railroad, will be taken for headquarters, and short excursions on foot or by rail will be made from it. Persons wishing to join the school should address Wm. M. Davis, Jr., 15 Summer St., Cambridge, Mass.

— Professor Henry urges the establishment of a national museum at Washington, with the government Centennial collection as a nucleus, and the repaid Centennial loan as a building and endowment fund.

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PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES.

New York Academy of Sciences. — *Biological Section*, October 2d. Captain J. H. Mortimer exhibited a series of pelagic animals, such as pteropods, Carinaria, Atlanta, Janthina, small cephalopods, crustacea, and the insect *Halobatis*, together with Salpa, Physalia, Porpita, Vellela,